

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions in the above-captioned application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A pole for a hand pallet truck comprising:
a pole bar linked to a support for a steerable wheel at its lower end and connected to a loop-shaped handle at the other end, the handle being centrally grippable at its rear end,
an operating device within the handle, the operating device being attached to a holding extension projecting into the handle in prolongation of the bar, and being connectable to a lifting apparatus of the hand pallet truck via a traction and/or pushing element,
~~characterized in that~~ wherein an operating lever (22, 24) is disposed on either side of the extension (16), the operating levers being pivotally mounted on the holding extension (16) in a plane defined by the handle (14), in that both operating levers (22, 24) act on a common displacement element (60) connected to the traction or pushing element (66) such that pulling the operating levers (22, 24) out of a neutral position away from the pole bar (10) causes a lowering operation and pushing the operating levers out of the neutral position towards the pole bar (10) allows a lifting operation of the lifting apparatus, and in that the operating levers (22, 24) are coupled by means of a coupling mechanism such that the lowering operation is effected by pulling either one single operating lever (22, 24) or both operating levers (22, 24) at the same time, and the lifting operation is effected by pushing either one single operating lever (22, 24) or both operating levers (22, 24).
2. (Original) The pole of claim 1, wherein the extent of pivotal movement of the operating levers (22, 24) determines the speed of the lowering operation and the coupling mechanism is designed such that the operating lever (22, 24) pulled furthest determines the lowering speed.

3. (Original) The pole of claim 1, wherein the coupling mechanism is designed such that one operating lever (22, 24) remains in the neutral position if the other one is being pulled.

4. (Original) The pole of claim 1, wherein the coupling mechanism is designed such that, when displacing the operating levers in pushing direction and back to the neutral position, both operating levers (22, 24) are moved synchronously, even if only one lever is being actuated.

5. (Original) The pole of claim 1, wherein the coupling mechanism is designed such that, when the operating levers (22, 24) are actuated in opposite directions, the function triggered (lowering or lifting) is the one corresponding to the operating lever on which the greater force is exerted.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The pole of claim 1, wherein the displacement element (60) is linearly movable and has a toothed rack portion (58) including a toothing (64, 62) on opposing sides and the operating levers (22, 24) each have a toothed portion cooperating with one toothing of the toothed rack portion (58).

7. (Original) The pole of claim 6, wherein the inner end portions (46, 48) of the operating levers (22, 24) cross each other in the region of the holding extension (16) and their pivot points (48, 50) are disposed on the respective opposite sides of the displacement element (60).

8. (Original) The pole of claim 1, wherein the holding extension (60) has a housing (20) formed by two shells (32, 34), the dividing plane of the housing being disposed in or parallel to the pivoting plane of operating levers (22, 24), wherein the operating levers (22, 24) and the displacement element (60) are mounted in the housing, the housing (20) having slots (42, 44) in the sides through which the operating levers (22, 24) project to the outside.

9. (Original) The pole of claim 8, wherein the housing shells (32, 34) have a socket portion receiving a tube portion (18) of the holding extension (16).

10. (Original) The pole of claim 1, wherein the coupling mechanism effects a restoration of the operating levers as soon as the actuating force acting on the respective operating lever lapses and also effects a locking in the neutral position or in the position of the lifting function.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The pole according to ~~one of claims 1 to 10~~ claim 1, wherein the holding extension and the pole bar are made in one piece.